



## **Mental Health Update May 11, 2007**

### **Approval of Vermont's Fiscal Year 2006 Report to the Center for Mental Health Services**

The Division of Mental Health (DMH) received notification last week from the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) that Vermont's report on Fiscal Year 2006 Block Grant activities meets all applicable federal requirements. The report was submitted on December 1, 2006. It covers mental-health services for adults with severe and persistent mental illness as well as for children and adolescents experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) a serious emotional disturbance.

Vermont's allocation of federal block grant money for mental-health services in Fiscal Year 2007 is \$780,471. In combination with funds from other sources, federal block grant funding supports:

- respite and community-based wraparound services for children and adolescents and their families,
- diverse adult programs that include Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT), integrated services for clients with co-occurring disorders of mental illness and substance abuse, a statewide peer advocacy organization and peer-operated initiatives, outreach on the Church Street Marketplace in Burlington, and
- for both children and adults, crisis services to prevent unnecessary hospitalization

### **NAMI Walk Begins on Statehouse Lawn – May 19**

Mental health consumers, family members, providers and friends are all invited to take part in a 3-mile walk to raise awareness and money for NAMI Vermont, a grassroots, volunteer organization that provides education and support for families coping with the problems presented by mental illness. Check-in for the walk begins at 9:30 a.m. on the Statehouse lawn. The NAMI Walk, itself, is from 11:00 to 1:00 on the Montpelier bike path. There are options to turn around along the way so the distance is up to the walker!

Besides the walk, there will be music, face painting, a clown and balloons plus free refreshments for people walking. The event will help to raise funds for NAMI Vermont. All ages are welcome. For more information, see [www.nami.org/namiwalks/VT](http://www.nami.org/namiwalks/VT). To call NAMI Vermont toll free: 1-800-639-6480.

## **FUTURES PROJECT**

### **Implementation Planning for New Crisis Bed Programs**

Northwest Counseling and Support Services (NCSS) has formed a crisis bed work group to guide implementation of new crisis stabilization services and inpatient diversion bed capacity. The project has three components:

- Crisis outreach services for CRT clients to prevent hospital emergency room use for mental health crises and hospital inpatient screening utilization;
- One community hospital-based observation bed at the Northwestern Vermont Medical Center for individuals with acute psychiatric symptoms requiring stabilization; and
- Two crisis stabilization beds to help prevent psychiatric hospital admissions and to reduce psychiatric hospital length of stay by providing “step-down” services.

The NCSS adult mental health program standing committee has been involved in the planning process. Consumers will participate in the hiring of staff for the new crisis services. The program will be organized around a recovery philosophy and will be responsive to people with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

New crisis bed capacities to improve access statewide are a key component of the Vermont State Hospital Futures Project. Northeast Kingdom Human Services also is in the midst of implementation planning for a two-bed community based crisis stabilization program being contracted with the Division of Mental Health.

### **Vermont's First Residential Recovery Program Opens**

Second Spring in Williamstown, Vermont opened its doors to three residents on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Gradually more residents will transition from Vermont State Hospital until the program reaches its planned capacity of eleven residents.

Second Spring staff has completed a two-week orientation and training program and is working in concert with VSH treatment teams to create a successful transition for each resident. .

### **VSEA Files Appeal of Conceptual CON**

The Vermont State Employees Association provided a notice of appeal to the Vermont Supreme Court of the BISHCA Commissioner's decision and order of the Vermont Department of Health Conceptual Certificate of Need Application to create new inpatient programs to enhance psychiatric inpatient care and replace the functions currently provided by the Vermont State Hospital.

### **Corrections Inpatient Work Group**

The Corrections Inpatient Work Group Meeting minutes from April 23<sup>rd</sup> are posted with this update.

## **VERMONT INTEGRATED SERVICES INITIATIVE**

### **VISI Partnerships**

We are pleased to announce four new VISI partnerships: Berlin Family Health, Valley Vista, United Counseling Services and the Clara Martin Center.

VISI will also be partnering with Vermont's seven PATH providers to build their capacity for screening and referral for people with co-occurring conditions. The PATH providers work with people who are homeless and have a serious mental illness. They typically work with people who are not engaged in Service and who may be mistrustful of formal systems.

### **National**

The VISI team has joined seven other COSIG states in a collaborative that will share information and resources regarding the Dual Diagnosis Capability in Addiction Treatment (DDCAT) fidelity tool. Each of the seven states are utilizing the tool and will work on upgrading tool and expanding the tool for use in other service centers such as primary health care.

### **VISI Committees**

VISI has joined the ADAP led workforce development committee. The committee had its first meeting in late April. This committee will focus on helping to create a co-occurring credential for counselors as well as developing workforce training and retention strategies.

The Finance committee has sent out a survey to the Chief Financial Officers of the designated agencies on the barriers to funding and serving people with co-occurring conditions.

### **Peer Support Services**

There was a focus group at the Turning Point in Rutland on April 27th. A co-occurring committee was established following the focus group and will meet each month to plan co-occurring supports.

## **VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL CENSUS**

The Vermont State Hospital Census was 44 as of midnight Wednesday night. The average census for the past 45 days was 51.